

(1)  
**A TRUE RELATION**

Of the EXECUTION of  
**JOHN SMITH, alias ASHBURNHAM,**

**(For Murder)**

At *Stamford-hill*, near *Tottenham*; where he was  
also Hang'd in Chains, on *Monday* the 26th. of  
*May*, 1684.

AND OF  
**Edward Jackson,**

Executed the same Day at *Tyburne*, for  
**HIGH-TREASON.**

WITH  
A Copy of a Paper of his own Writing deliver'd in  
*Negate*: As likewise a true Account of their  
Behaviour, and last Confessions, at the said Places  
of Execution.

**W**HEREAS at the late Sessions of Gaol-Delivery held in the *Old-Bailly*  
on *Thursday* and *Friday*, the 15th. and 16th. days of *May*, 1684. Five  
Men received Sentence of Death, (*viz.*) *Edward Hubbard*, *John*  
*Gower*, *Francis Robinson*, *John Smith*, alias *Ashburnham*, and *Edward*  
*Jackson*; of which Persons, *Edward Hubbard* was Reprieved from Execution.

And whereas a Warrant was directed for Execution of the rest on *Friday* the 17th.  
of the said month, the morning of the said *Friday*, Reprieves came for *Edward*  
*Jackson*, and *John Smith*, &c. until the *Monday* following, *Gower* and *Robinson* only  
being that day Executed, (from whence some believed a Pardon might have suc-  
ceeded;) which time of Reprieve being expired, they were likewise Executed on  
*Monday* the 26th. day of *May* before-mentioned; *viz.*

First, *John Smith*, alias *Ashburnham*, a Notorious Highway-man, whose Name hath  
been in a *Proclamation*, and several *Gazetts*, in order to his being Apprehended, was  
Indicted, Tryed, and found Guilty, for the Murder of *Andrew Page*, a Head-  
borough



borough of *Stoke-Newington*, (two or three miles from *London*) in *July* was Twelve-month, when the said *Page* was in the Execution of his Office with his Watchmen in pursuit of the said *Smith*, &c. and others that had committed divers Robberies on the Road near that Town.

From the time of his Sentence he behaved himself very penitently in *Newgate*, bewailing his ill-spent time, which now was like to bring him to a sorrowful and shameful End; owning that he had received much Benefit from the painful Endeavours of *Mr. Ordinary*, to whom he confess'd he had been Guilty of many Robberies on the High-way, but disowned that ever he was Guilty of Murder.

On *Monday*, between Seven and Eight in the morning, he was brought out of *Newgate*, put into a Cart, and drawn to the Gibbet that hath for some Years stood at *Stamford Hill*, near the great Road which leads to *Ware*.

When there, besides several Answers and Confessions he made to the Sheriffs Officers and others, he desired the Assistance of a Minister; one being sent for, asked him several Questions, viz. If he had Repented him of his Sins? What Hopes he had of a future State? and what Religion he died of? To which he answered very readily and properly; and as to his Religion, That he hoped he was a true Catholic of the Church of *England*, a Protestant Catholic, or such like Words.

The Minister again ask'd, If he had confess'd all the Outrages that he had done? for that without Confession and Repentance, there was no Remission to be expected; that he would do well to disburthen his Conscience, whether he did kill the Man, &c. To all which he answer'd, That he was in the Company when he was kill'd; That they were Four in all which had at that time been several hours upon the Road, Two of which were since taken and hang'd; That the Man who kill'd him, viz. one *William Hancock*, is yet alive, and, as he supposed, in *Warwick* Gaol; That the Constable, or he that was kill'd, come up, and took hold of *Hancocks* Bridle, who then discharged a Pistol, and kill'd him; That he himself was very near when it was done, but had no hand in his death.

He confess'd himself to have been Guilty of Adultery, Fornication, Swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and other great Sins, for which he hoped he had repented: He desired the Minister to pray with him, and after that was ended, he went up the Ladder, desiring the Prayers of all the Spectators, and soon after was turn'd off. When dead, his Body was cut down, and put into a Frame of Iron fitted, as usual in such Cases, afterwards hung up again upon the Gibbet, where it now remains hanging.

*Edward Jackson*, a Merchant, or other considerable Trader in the City of *London*, being Indicted at the said Sessions for High-Treason in Clipping the currant Coin of this Kingdom, Tryed, and upon positive Evidence found Guilty of the said Indictment, received Sentence to be drawn upon a Sledge to the place of Execution, and there hang'd by the Neck till he was dead.

His Behaviour in *Newgate* after Sentence, was continually most lively Expressions of a true Penitent Sinner, spending his Time in Prayer and other Religious Exercises, for the most part, Day and Night; and on *Sunday* the 25th. was very attentive at the Chappel, where *Mr. Ordinary* preached from that Text of Sacred Scripture, 11th. of *St. Matthew's* Gospel, 28th. Verse, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.*

On *Monday*, the 26th. between Ten and Eleven in the Fore-noon, he was brought from *Newgate*, put into a Sledge, and therein drawn to *Tyburn*, Reading and Praying all the way with a loud Voice; the like not known in the memory of man.

When come into the Carr, he spoke to the People with an audible Voice to the effect following, viz. That he was Tryed at the *Old-Baily* on the 13th. of this month, and found Guilty of Clipping money, &c. That he believed in God, and as he expected Relief and Comfort from *Jesus Christ*, he was as clear as that Child, (pointing to a little Child;.) That if the Witnesses against him might have been examined apart, they would have been Intrapped, reflecting a little upon the Court; for which he being reproved, he proceeded more moderately, saying, He was taken up in *November* last, no Bail would be taken; yet no Indictment being against him, was at the Sessions after Cleared by Proclamation; That the Witnesses against him were then in *Newgate*, and had nothing to say; That had he been afraid of them, they might then have gone away; That they were to dye themselves, but got off, and being



being taken up again, had been prosecuted and hang'd, unless they would peach some others. That if he would have given 3*l*. they would not have accused him, or served the Lord Chief Justices's Warrant upon him; That he was not afraid, as concluding his Life was in no danger, because he never either Clipt any himself, or saw others do it; That he would not deny the putting off Four or five Pieces of melted Silver, but he had it of *Nickens*; That he had deserved this Death for his Sins, and he desired to take Publick Shame to Himself; That he forgave all the World, and dyed in Peace, freely forgiving those who swore falsely against him.

That he had once Hoped the King would have been so merciful to have granted his Pardon; That he had offended God in one thing, in speaking of two or three, by reason he would fain have saved his Life, tho in truth he knew nothing of that kind against any man, or was any ways Guilty more than putting off some Filings or Clippings that were melted down, which he conceived the Law did not reach to punish with Death. He said it was a sad thing he must so suffer; That he came of pretty good Parents himself, none of his Family having any Spot amongst them; That he was likewise the Eldest Son, (but twenty eight Years of Age;) That he had married into a good Family; for which reason, he lamented his Disgraceful End. He spoke much more to this Effect. Then *Mr. Ordinary* Prayed a considerable time with him, in which he joyned, and sung a Psalm with great Earnestness and Affection.

*Mr. Ordinary* said, The Lord fit you for this great Work, which can be done but once, Death giving us a Prospect of Eternity; That he would have him ease his mind; That he hoped he had concealed none of the Clippers, or any thing to the prejudice of His Majesties Government: To which *Jackson* answered, that *Mr. Ordinary* prest things very home to him, but he could say no more than he had said.

One ask'd him, if he had not put off clip'd money in his Payments; he answered, Yes, he had put off many score Pounds of clip'd money; adding, and so have you put off clip'd money too. The same Person again ask'd if it was not newly clip'd; He said, Yes, he believed he had often put off money new clip'd; for he believed, *Nickens* clip'd his money frequently, but he himself never clip'd, or see it clip'd.

*Mr. Ordinary* then ask'd if he would pray himself; for that he had observed him to pray in *Newgate* with much Zeal and Understanding: *Mr. Jackson* said, He was almost spent (for indeed he prayed several hours with some Intermittions of other occasional Speeches;) howbeit, he fix'd himself into a more particular Form of Prayer, in the Words following:

**O** Lord most Holy, Good and Gracious, Everlasting and Blessed God, how Glorious art thou, Lord God, Thou art a Great God, and a Merciful God, and Thou hast done for me a Thousand times more than I deserved; I confess I have been a great Sinner, done those things I ought not to have done, and left undone what I ought to have done: Lord, help me, strengthen my Faith every minute more and more, those few minutes I have to live, that when my Soul and Body parts, my Soul may ascend up to Heaven; and that he that shed his Blood for Sinners, may make my peace with God. Let my Sins be covered, forsake me not, because of my Sins; I have been a great Sinner, I have offended against thy Holy Laws, I have humbly confess them all.

At this part of his Prayer, he speaking of his Accusers and Indictment, some Interruption was made, and Questions ask'd him.

Also some of the Sheriffs Officers discovering Impatience to have the Execution dispatched, *Jackson* said, Lord, Gentlemen, be not so Unkind, I would fain dye in Peace: Then he proceeded in his Prayer.

Lord, for Christ Jesus sake, forgive me all my Sins, I have confess them upon my bended knees; Grant that I may be a warning to others, that they may spend their Sabbath better; walk uprightly and justly, and do nothing contrary to God's Law: Lord receive my everlasting Soul, Jesus keep me from the Torments of Hell. One thing more I beg, Lord, bless the poor Widow that will be by and by, the Lord raise her Friends, and give her grace to undergo this Trouble. And now I part in Peace, I have repented me of all my Sins, and for Christ Jesus sake enable me with all things necessary this day, concluding this my imperfect Prayer, as Christ himself hath taught me. Our Father, &c.

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The Very Words of the P A P E R written and delivered by Mr. Jackson,  
and others, as followeth.

John Nickonson was my School-fellow about Fifteen Years ago, and was born within  
Four miles of me; about Three years and an half since he came up to London, and  
came to me, desiring me to help him to a Place, which I endeavour'd to do all that I could. At  
last he got a Place with Sir Paul Neal in Essex-Buildings, with whom he liv'd, as I take  
it, about Three quarters of a year, I was bound with him for his Honesty in a considerable  
Sum of money to the said Sir Paul—After he left that Employ, he came to me with a  
second Application, and, I think, had no Employment since, only I sent him divers times to  
receive and pay money for me in City and Countrey.

Thomas Martin was my Countrey man, and born about Five miles from me; he often  
borrow'd money of me, which he sometimes did, and sometimes did not return: I had no great  
intimacy with him, only when I saw him, I shew'd him respect for Countreys-sake.

As for Thomas Hickam, he was once at my House, and I do not remember that I was  
ever in his Company above three or four times in my Life.

These three swore that I Clip'd the King's Coin. My Tryal was on the 15th. Day of May,  
1684. Now, as I am a Dying Man, and so have no reason to leave the World with a Lye in  
my Mouth, I profess, That I am not Guilty of what they the aforesaid Persons have Sworn  
against me; viz. That they never saw me Clip Money, nor that I never saw any of them Clip  
Money. As for Nickonson, he has had several Sums of Money of mine in his Hands, which I  
do believe he did Clip, but I never saw him do it.

Nickonson and Hickam Swore at my Tryal, That they melted Clippings at my House. I  
remember they came on a Saturday to my House, and desir'd the Privacy of a Room; I  
ask'd them for what? They replied, For no Harm: So I told them, they may. I went up and  
down the City about my Business; and it seems they had sent a Porter for a Basket of Char-  
coals. At my Return, they were in the Warehouse, and said, they had done their Business.

About the latter end of last Summer was two Years, Nickonson brought me two pieces  
of melted Silver, (I think the Goldsmiths call them Pigs or Wedges) which I sold to Mr.  
Hutchinson, a Goldsmith, at Chelmsford, who was an Evidence at my Tryal that I sold  
it to him.

Some time after, Nickonson brought me two Pieces more, which I dispos'd of to Mr. Bul-  
lock at the Horse-shoe in Cheapside, Goldsmith. Of both these I had some Benefit or Profit  
for the Disposal. And this is all I was concern'd in; which I declare on the Words of a Dying  
Man, to be as near Truth as I can remember: and that as to any actual or personal Clipping,  
or diminishing the King's Coin, I am as Innocent as the Child in the Mothers Womb.

May 10. 1684.

Edward Jackson.

#### POSTSCRIPT.

It was observable, That after Mr. Jackson had Pray'd himself, he desired Leave  
of the Ordinary. That another Minister might Pray also; and after that, he de-  
sired Mr. Ordinary himself to Pray once more: Both being ended, the Execution-  
er proceeded to do his Office; in which Juncture, before the Cart was drawn away,  
he uttered many Heavenly Expressions, with such Passion, Loudness, and Earnest-  
ness, that he melted Hundreds of Spectators into Tears.

I Subscribed this Narrative  
on the 26th. of May, 1684.

Samuel Smith Ord-  
inary of Newgate.

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